



Agriculture News Yellowstone County Extension

April 2008

TO: Farm & Ranch Businesses
FROM: Yellowstone County Extension

Yellowstone County Agriculture Agent Update

We want to keep you updated about our Ag Agent situation. Unfortunately the individual who was hired for the position decided not to relocate to Montana. We currently have been accepting applications for the position and if you know someone who would be a good candidate, details about the job can be found at: <http://extn.msu.montana.edu/>

Miles City Ag Agent, Kent Williams, will be helping our county until we have a new agent hired. Kent will be in our Billings office on April 9th. Feel free to stop by the office or give him a call. Kent will also be in Billings various days in April but we do not yet have a schedule. Should you wish to meet with Kent, call our office at 256-2828 and we can tell you what dates he will be in the office. We thank Kent for taking the time to help Yellowstone County farmers and ranchers.

Current Dynamics in Agriculture: Energy Costs, Global Markets, Ag Policy, Price Protection, & Leasing Arrangements

Agricultural producers are facing changes in agriculture due to volatile energy costs, global market conditions and changing government policy. Factors influencing those issues will be described during meetings in Great Falls May 6 and **BILLINGS MAY 8th**.

Duane Griffith, Montana State University Extension farm management specialist, said sessions will be presented by people from North Dakota State University, South Dakota State University and MSU.

The program will also provide information helpful to crop and livestock producers who are concerned about very short term issues, like locking in commodity prices for this fall, rapidly rising production costs and renegotiating lease arrangements.

Protecting expected high commodity prices will be covered with presentations on using the futures and options markets and available insurance products for crops and livestock. Current cost of production estimates will be shared, as will expectations about future costs of production. These estimates will be used as a basis for presentations on negotiating equitable crop share and cash lease arrangements under the emerging commodity prices and costs of production.

The May 6 workshop in Great Falls will be at the Holliday Inn. The **May 8 presentation in Billings** will be at the Holliday Inn near the King Avenue interstate highway exit. Both programs begin with a sign-in at 8 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

Pre-registration is required so that lunch, breaks and meeting materials can be planned. To register, contact MSU at 406-994-3511, the Great Falls Extension office at (406) 454-6980 or the Billings Extension office at (406) 256-2828. Registration is \$50 for the first person from an operation and \$30 for each additional person from the same operation, and payment can be made at the door. See agenda on reverse side.

May 6th (Great Falls) and May 8th (Billings) Meeting Agenda

- 9:00 ~ 10:00 **Introductions and Keynote** (Duane Griffith - MSU/Cole Gustafson - NDSU)
Energy Sector Impacts on Ag: Where are we headed?
Long run projects.
Energy Prices/Costs.
Energy Technology, where is it headed and what does that mean?
New Energy Legislation, where will it take us?
- 10:15 ~ 11:15 **Protecting expected high prices for the fall of 2008 using the futures & options markets** (Matt Diersen - SDSU)
Current pricing strategies for Grain and Livestock commodities using futures & options.
Wheat, Barley, Calves, Corn.
- 11:15 ~ 12:00 **Price, Revenue, & Cost Protection for Livestock with Insurance** (Griffith)
LRP and LGM.
- 12:00 ~ 1:30 **Lunch and Speaker** (Dr. Vince Smith - MSU)
Agricultural outlook: How did we get here and where are we going?
Ag in a global economy.
Commodity market volatility.
Impacts of a slowing world economy, winners and losers.
New Farm Bill and its implication; other new legislation.
- 1:45 ~ 2:30 **Price and Revenue Protection for Crops with Insurance** (Dr. Gary Brester - MSU)
CRC, RA, and IP.
- 2:30 ~ 3:15 **Cost of Production: Now and in the Future** (Griffith)
Review current estimates of crop and livestock costs of production.
Where are they at and where are they going?
Provide tools to help producers estimate their costs of production.
Introduce survey in PDF form.
- 3:30 ~ 4:15 **Crop and Livestock Share and Cash Lease Arrangements** (Dr. George Haynes - MSU)
Use cost of production and the contributions approach to leasing to outline lease negotiations and "equitable" lease arrangements.
Converting Crop Share to Cash Leases
Distribution of risks between landlord and tenant
Provide tools for producers to calculate leases based on the cost of production.
- 4:15 ~ 4:30 **Wrap up and Question period**

List or Buy Seed on New MSU Extension Web Site

Montana's farmers are finding that spring wheat seed seems to be in short supply this spring, but there is a new service from Montana State University Extension that is intended to help.

MSU Extension has launched a new website to connect those who have seed with those who want to plant it. The website, <http://montanaseedconnection.org> is available through June 1, 2008. Seed growers and seed dealers can use the website to let farmers know what varieties they still have in stock. Farmers looking for seed can log on to the site to find a seed source and to locate the varieties they want to plant.

For Fact Sheets and General Ag Information Specific to Yellowstone County,

Please refer to our web page at:

<http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov/extension/ag/>